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ABSTRACT

This report describes the use of videotaped lectures in the undergraduate library instruction program at the University of Nebraska at Omaha Library, outlines the structure of the program, and reviews the process of producing library-specific videotapes. The results of an informal survey to compare the videotape method of presentation with a slide/lecture method are reported. (FM)

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Videotape as an Aid to Bibliographic Instruction

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TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

The Reference Department of the UNO Library had developed a very effective library instruction program for the beginning undergraduate. This program was described in a Resources in Education paper written by Clark Hallman and entitled "A Library Instruction Program for Beginning Undergraduates", ED 188 633, November, 1980. It was decided to further improve this program through the use of videotape.

This library instruction program is used specifically with students enrolled in the University Division. The University Division, established in the 1962-63 academic year, provides a setting in which the student who has not yet made a definite choice as to a major is free to take an exploratory program of studies. A staff of full-time counselors is available to assist the student in finding suitable personal, educational, and career goals. Establishing good study habits and finding a sense of purpose and direction are goals, and if attained will increase the student's chances of success in a college program. A one-credit hour Academic Career Development course is required of all freshmen in the University Division. This course stresses study skills development, career exploration, efficient library usage, and offers a student weekly contact and interaction with a University Division counselor. As part of the efficient library usage, two weeks out of each semester have been set aside for library instruction. In these two weeks there are four class meetings in the library. The first session each week, the class is presented library instruction by the Reference Department. The second session of each week is set aside for the students to complete a workbook designed to follow and reinforce the lecture. A copy of this workbook was included in Mr. Hallman's RIE paper. The two library instruction classes are to help the student achieve independence and competence in understanding how to use certain library resources and to

help the students develop a positive attitude towards the library. The first of the two library instruction classes deals with departments within the library, policies and services of the library, use of the card catalog, Library of Congress Subject Headings, indexes, periodicals and how to locate them in the library. The second class instructs the students in the use of newspaper indexes, abstracting services, the Monthly Catalog of U.S. Government Publications, and how to locate newspapers and documents in the library. This second session of Academic Career Development was chosen to videotape first, since it dealt with more specific resources and yet was shorter in time length.

The Academic Career Development library lectures have been given by professional librarians in the Reference Department, and in the last two or three years, help from the non-professional Reference Technologists was sought. For the past few years, these lectures had been given with the use of slides to complement an oral lecture. This slide/lecture method of presentation had proved successful, but a more efficient, exact, and less time-consuming method was desirable. As the University increased its enrollment, so did the Academic Career Development classes increase in number and size. In the Spring of 1980 library instruction was presented to 10 ACD classes and reached approximately 181 students. In the Fall of 1980 there were 16 ACD classes and the Reference Department instruction reached 327 students. In the Spring of 1981 there were 11 classes with a total enrollment of 205 students. Traditionally, Fall semester classes are larger than Spring semester. At the same time the ACD classes were increasing, the Reference Department faculty was decreasing due to to budgetary constraints and vacancies. Thus it was becoming increasingly important to find a more efficient way to provide library instruction.

There have been increasing demands on the Reference staff to present

library instruction lectures. In 1979-80, we gave 210 lectures to approximately 3500 students. In the interest of maintaining our personal contact and carefully tailored lecture system, we wanted to find ways to minimize constant repetition of frequently delivered general lectures. Computerized database searches and faculty status (and expectations) arrived simultaneously in the summer of 1979 and have increasingly encroached on the time available to Reference staff members. Our Reference Desk is open 77 hours a week, and we have at least one professional on the desk each of these hours. Our staff consists of 6 professionals and 2 paraprofessional FTE.

Our feeling was that we could select a few frequently repeated lectures and put them on videotape so that we could free more time to follow up with the students more effectively. We tried to make a very high quality tape to eliminate the variation among the different lectures and among various presentations by the same lecturer.

We had the advantage of having both moral and financial support from the library administration. The director funded our first tape - when the bill came in for $800 he authorized payment for a tape that was sixteen minutes long. After seeing the results and evaluation of the first tape, the director authorized funding for taping the second lecture as well.

Another great advantage was having access to good facilities and expertise. Our library owns a 6' projection TV as well as videotape recorders and monitors. The University runs a TV station and has excellent staff and equipment.

Once the decision had been made to produce the tape there were several other decisions to be made. The first of these was whether to tape on-site in the library with portable equipment or tape the lecture in the TV studio, bringing the items to be discussed along with us.

We chose to tape in the library for several reasons: it allows students who are typically not familiar with the building to see the spatial relationships among the different departments and resources; they are able to see how one moves from the L.C. Subject Headings volumes to the subject portion of the card catalog, for example. They can see what each tool looks like and where it is located i. the building.

A draw-back we saw in choosing this course is that we wound up with a presentation that is quite library-specific. That is, since we refer to "Index Table 5 . . ." or "Abstract Range E . . ." the tape is not readily adaptable to other libraries. In this form our tape is very appropriate for use with other introductory classes beyond University Division, since the library resources we introduced are very widely used in virtually all subject areas of academic study. The tape, at 16 minutes, is short enough that we can introduce it, show it, and follow it up either with reinforcement of the concepts covered or with follow-up into more subject-specific tools related to the needs of a particular class.

We were fortunate in having as our departmental coordinator for the University Division program a strong, self-disciplined person who worked hard to bring the project to completion. What we hadn't realized before was that she was a "natural talent" on-screen. We had considered using different librarians in various segments of the tape, but decided to go with our strength when we discovered a star in our midst.

Our campus television station, KYNE, obviously played an important part in our decision to make the videotape. They gave us advice at each stage of production and carried out all the technical work. Once the decision had been made to shoot the videotape, our first task was to prepare a script. We recorded an actual lecture on audiocassette,

transcribed it and had this draft typed, then read through it in front of several reference department colleagues. Many small refinements were made in this process, so we feel we strengthened and improved the lecture we arrived at by consensus.

Our next step was to "block out" the lecture with the TV station producer/director in the library to plan the shooting. A few days later the producer/director was back with a cameraperson, camera, and recording equipment, and we spent two and a half hours taping.

The most critical and most time-consuming portion was the editing process. The two authors spent 1½ hours with our director giving her an even better feel for what we wanted to show, then left her to edit for several more hours. The next day we went back to view the "finished product" on 1" tape. At this stage we made a few very minor suggestions which were incorporated into this master tape and the final copy was dubbed onto 3/4" videocassettes. We keep the original first copy in our archives. Our second copy is kept in the Reference Department and is used when we give lectures. A third copy is kept in the Library Media Center and is available for any patron to view at any time the building is open.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the videotape as compared to the slide/lecture method of presentation, a questionnaire was provided to students viewing the videotape. Out of the 11 classes in Spring of 1981 that received instruction, 7 of these were shown the videotape and the remaining 4 received the usual slide/lecture presentation. Members of the Reference Department responsible for presenting the lectures were unanimously in support of the videotape, as were the ACD professors. All felt that the videotape presented the subject matter in a logical, easy to understand manner. All felt that it was a vast improvement over

the slide/lecture presentation because of the professional time it would save and because of the uniformity and clarity of presentation. The workbooks which were completed by all ACD students, those viewing the videotape and those receiving the slide/lecture, were graded by members of the Reference Department. Comparison of grades between those viewing the videotape and those receiving the slide/lecture showed no apparent differences. So it would seem that both methods of presentation were equally effective in teaching the students how to use certain library resources.

The questionnaire which was returned by 28 students compared the slide/lecture given in the 1st library presentation to the videotape viewed in the 2nd session. Through this questionnaire the students could give their opinion on which type of presentation they preferred, although the actual library resources covered in the two presentations were different. Of the 8 questions, the first 5 could be answered slide/lecture, videotape, or no difference. It was felt that even if the majority of students ruled that there was no difference in presentations, the Reference Department would still "win". That is, the Department could provide library instruction with more ease and flexibility using the videotape. The questions were answered as follows:

UNIVERSITY DIVISION
LIBRARY ORIENTATION

Instructor _____

	slide/ lecture	videotape	no difference
1. Which presentation was more informative?	2	18	8
2. Which seemed to present the information more clearly?	3	23	2
3. Which presentation was more interesting to you?	2	20	6
4. Which of the presentations was more useful in helping you use the library?	4	17	7
5. Which held you attention better? (1 - none)	4	18	5

6. Were there technical problems that distracted from the presentation?

	yes -	no -
slide/lecture	6	22
videotape	0	28

7. Did you understand the subject matter?

	yes -	no -
slide/lecture	27	1
videotape	27	1

8. How would you prefer to obtain this information about the library? (Number in order of preferences, with number 1 being your first choice, number 2 being your second choice, etc.)

	1st	2nd	3rd
slide/lecture	3	15	2
videotape	17	2	6
asking your teacher	2	1	7
ask your librarian	4	5	9
reading a library instruction handbook	2	4	2

(2 had no 3rd choice)
(1 had no 2nd choice)

As you can tell, our evaluations were largely subjective and impressionistic, but our results were very positive and encouraging. To make our evaluation even more difficult, there was a snowstorm on one of the class presentation days. And although this made it difficult to count just how many students received the slide/lecture or viewed the videotape, we were grateful for having the videotape. Many of the students who could not make it to class returned to the library and individually viewed the videotape and were then able to complete their workbook. We are now in the process of videotaping the first ACD library presentation so that this Fall the Reference Department will be ready to present library instruction to all ACD classes and know that all will be presentations well done and consistent.